

The Bottom Line

News from the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business

Fall 2023

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Message From Dean Theodore Richardson

I'm pleased to share the exciting developments happening as we commence the fall semester at the Bisk College of Business. Our faculty, staff and students are actively engaged, setting the stage for a promising and spirited start to the academic year.

In this newsletter, we highlight the accomplishments and endeavors of our students, faculty and alumni. From noteworthy research to outstanding student achievements, our college is a thriving hub of activity, and we're proud to share these accomplishments with you.

I'd like to express my gratitude to our dedicated staff, faculty members and students for their contributions. Your commitment is essential to the continued success of the Bisk College of Business.

Together, we're shaping the future of business education. Thank you for being an integral part of our community, and I anticipate celebrating our shared successes in the future.



Respectfully,
Theodore R. Richardson III, Ed.D.
Dean, Bisk College of Business

Panthers on the Rise

TOM BELL '86 MBA

Tom Bell was named CEO of Leidos in May.



TOM GARTHWAITE '92 M.S.

Tom Garthwaite was recently selected by BayCare as the president of Winter Haven Hospital and Winter Haven Women's Hospital. Garthwaite started his BayCare career eight years ago.



THEON DANET '00 MBA

Theon Danet has been appointed acting deputy director and chief operating officer of the Defense Commissary Agency.



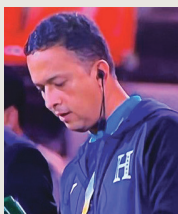
RUSSELL DEATHERAGE '02, '17 MBA

Russell Deatherage began working as an IT manager at Northrop Grumman Corp., supporting multiple programs and initiatives in the BWI area within Maryland.



GERARDO VALERIO '05

Gerardo Valerio, a former Florida Tech men's soccer midfielder, recently led the Honduras Men's U20 National Team in the U20 World Cup in Argentina.



ROBERT COLLINS '15 MBA

Robert Collins accepted a position with Arizona State University as a project manager overseeing programs and projects for the enterprise technology group.



MANNY ABAD '15, '16 MBA TYLER (HECKMAN) BAILEY '16, '17 MBA, '19 M.S.

Manny Abad and Tyler (Heckman) Bailey became licensed certified public accountants (CPAs) earlier this year.



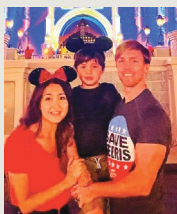
GARY HOLMES JR. '17, '19 MBA

Gary Holmes Jr. was promoted to principal system test engineer on the E-2 program at Northrop Grumman Corp.



STEVEN FARRIS '18 MBA

Steven Farris was promoted to manager of programs at Northrop Grumman Corp. in January.



AMY TAYLOR '18 MBA

Amy Taylor was promoted to senior marketing manager at Marriott International, where she oversees marketing strategy for two resorts in the Southeast.



GLENESHIA WAUL '19

Gleneshia Waul accepted a new position as a life solutions specialist with USAA. She also recently got engaged and finished building a custom home in Tampa.



BILL BAILEY '21 MBA

Bill Bailey is the CEO of Radiance Technologies, which develops innovative solutions for defense, intelligence and civilian customers' advanced challenges. Radiance has over 1,000 employees, including more than 100 Florida Tech graduates.



ROMANA ROUF CHOWDHURY '21 MBA

Romana Rouf Chowdhury was reelected as the chairman of Bank Asia Securities Ltd. She is the managing director of Sea Natural Food Ltd., Sea Fishers Ltd. and Sea Resources Group.



SHANE CUPID '22 MBA

Shane Cupid joined STEMBoard as a data analyst.



RAMONE HEMPHILL SR. '22 MBA

Ramone Hemphill Sr., founder of The 99th Squadron Inc., received the Brigadier General Charles E. McGee Aviation Inspiration Award.





A+ Accolades

The Bisk College of Business and its programs continue to be recognized as some of the best in the nation. Some of our most exciting recent accolades:

Forbes

Top 10 Best Management Information Systems Online Degrees of 2023 (for business administration degree with a computer information systems concentration)

Colleges of Distinction

2023–2024 College of Distinction (for undergraduate business degree, as well as university-wide)

Doctor of Business Administration Program Update

Four students graduated from the DBA program this summer: Sarah Christie '16 M.S., Tyrone Gorrick, Bruce Rideout and Nathan Rozea. We sat down with Bruce Rideout to talk about his time in the program and his plans for the future.

BRUCE RIDEOUT '23 DBA

Why Florida Tech's DBA program?

Florida Tech's DBA program combined the best aspects of a well-designed program and a practitioner's degree approach in my areas of interest.



What did you enjoy most about the program?

The cohort model facilitated the development of close, personal relationships and tacit knowledge transfer.

Now that you've completed your DBA, what's next?

I am looking at shifting to a college-level teaching role or business leadership/innovation consulting role. A combination of both is a potential next adventure.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

A terminal or doctoral degree has opened the world of deep research resources and skill development that are less common in the business world today.

Cohort 9 began this fall with 13 new students. We talked with DBA student Patrick Henley about why he chose Florida Tech, what he plans to do upon graduating and his life outside of school.

PATRICK HENLEY



What are you currently working on in the DBA program?

After passing my proposal defense in July of this year, I am focusing on completing my research and preparing for my final defense. My research focuses on the impacts of talent strategies among water treatment organizations.

What is your goal for the future?

Currently, I work in the field of human resources and risk management in the water treatment industry. I also teach part time at a local technical college in the Atlanta, Georgia, area. I plan to continue doing both, but I also want to assist the water treatment industry through researching and developing potential solutions to some of the many complex issues facing the industry—especially those issues relating to workforce recruitment, development, retention and effectiveness.

Why Florida Tech's DBA program?

For years, I've thought about a doctoral degree but never found a program that matched my needs: a challenging curriculum, a convenient location, class schedules designed for a working career practitioner and being cost effective. One day, while researching programs, I came across Florida Tech's DBA program, and it easily met all of my requirements. The program is perfect for someone who is looking to move from simply applying established business theories and methods to intricate business challenges, to cultivating the ability to formulate innovative theories and best practices in the business realm.

What do you enjoy most about the program?

I enjoyed having the opportunity to hone my writing skills and dive deeper into specific areas of business administration. However, I have to say that I have most enjoyed getting to know and grow with my cohort! This experience has given me a chance to connect and network with some of the brightest, most selfless and kind people I have ever encountered.

When not completing schoolwork, what do you like to do?

Not completing schoolwork—what is that? Just kidding. I really enjoy working for the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority as the director of human resources and risk management. My position affords me the opportunity to mentor, assist people with their career development and play a part in providing a precious resource to the community in which I am a member.

When I am not working, I love to travel, learn and experience new and different cultures, reading and spending quality time with the people who are most important to me—my wife, family and friends.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

I would just like to add three things.

First, there is a major advantage to being a part of a cohort. My cohort (Cohort 6) helped, and continues to help, me stay focused and encouraged. They are more than willing to share knowledge, allow me to bounce ideas off of them and check in on each other from time to time to offer support and encouragement.

Secondly, I want to thank my friends, family and coworkers who frequently check on me, listen to me talk about business theories (and pretend to be interested) and show understanding for the times I may have missed a gathering or event because of school and/or work commitments. Some of them have assisted or had a positive impact on my ability during this process (probably more than they would ever know), and I am so appreciative to have them in my life.

Lastly, for me, I have not gone through this program alone. My wife, Heather, has been there for me every step of the way. She has encouraged me (especially during the times I wanted to give up), picked up the slack around the house to allow me to focus on my schoolwork and has been my greatest inspiration throughout this process. I say all of this to say that some may not need it, but having a support system can be very beneficial to a successful outcome in this program.



‘IT ALWAYS STARTS WITH ONE’:

Alumna Jazmin Truesdale Creates Diverse, Female Superheroes

By day, Jazmin Truesdale '11 MBA works in the tech industry. But by night, she transforms into a superhero on the pages of *Aza Comics*.

Growing up, Truesdale loved reading comic books and watching superhero movies, but she noticed one major flaw: a lack of women in leading hero roles, particularly in films.

“It was always male characters with the females as supporting

side roles. No one was doing anything with their female superheroes at the time,” Truesdale says. She remembers thinking, “Well, I can change that.”

Inspired by her favorite superhero, Wonder Woman, Truesdale started brainstorming her comic series, *The Keepers: Origins*.

She created a digital video trailer for the series: a space-fantasy adventure

starring a team of diverse, female superheroes.

At first, she received negative feedback from agents, who advised her to switch the leading Black heroine’s race to white for better publishing, but Truesdale put her foot down to ensure that girls like her could see themselves in comic books.

“A lot of the characters are based on real people who inspired me growing up,” she says. “My leading black female character, whom I was told would be unmarketable, is my most popular character.”

Once the framework of her story was complete, Truesdale started sending the trailer to other industry giants for advice and guidance on what her next steps should be.

The connections she made through the process led her to become a panelist at comic-cons throughout the U.S., where she presented her ideas to the people who would be directly consuming them.

To Truesdale’s surprise, her sessions sold out so fast that event staff had to bring in extra seating.

“The concept of this universe with strong female characters resonated. My room was predominantly women, and it was fascinating to see that response,” she says.

Originally, Truesdale planned to hire writers to create her comic book universe, but after her presentation, the writers of *The Walking Dead* comic book series approached her and persuaded her to write the story herself.

She got to work, and the rest is “her-story!”

Today, Truesdale is the founder of Aza Entertainment, a production company centered on telling the stories of women with diverse backgrounds.

“It always starts with one,” Truesdale says. “Just be resourceful, find a way and always keep trying.”



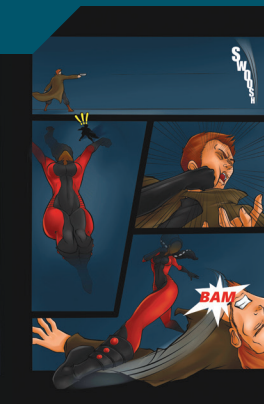
Favorite Florida Tech Memory: My capstone course. I have carried the skills that I learned in that class into Aza Entertainment for when I’m coming up with product lines and how I want to go about things in the business.

Favorite Superhero Movie: “Wonder Woman,” starring Gal Gadot

Superpower: Flight

Relaxing Activity: Working out

Real-life superhero: Janet Jackson



“The concept of this universe with strong female characters resonated. My room was predominantly women, and it was fascinating to see that response.”

— Jazmin Truesdale

Student Spotlight

Jared McColpin

FASTTRACK MBA STUDENT REPRESENTS COB ON 'THE COLLEGE TOUR'

As part of the FastTrack Master's Degree program, Jared McColpin is earning both his bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration.

In August, Jared McColpin represented the Bisk College of Business on camera in Florida Tech's new episode of Amazon Prime TV's "The College Tour."

In his segment, McColpin explains that he chose Florida Tech because he wanted to feel like a person and not just a number. During his college search, he sought a university where he could develop close connections with his professors and gain real-world experience that would help him feel prepared to join the workforce, and Florida Tech offered just that, he says.

"Florida Tech's commitment to practical learning is embodied by its business faculty, who bring a wide range of industry expertise into every classroom," he says in the segment. "These professors coach students in preparation for activities like live case competitions, where we get professional experience pitching ideas to real business leaders. My professors have always been outstanding mentors, supporting me in my chosen field of study and offering crucial support as I work toward my goals."

Keep an eye out for the episode's online release, slated for November, and mark your calendars for the Amazon Prime Video premiere in February.



“Florida Tech’s commitment to practical learning is embodied by its business faculty.”

— Jared McColpin



Happenings

CATCH UP WITH weVENTURE

weVENTURE

Women's Business Center had a busy summer.

In June, the organization hosted the Hispanic Business Summit at the Center for

Advanced Manufacturing and Innovative Design (CAMID). At the event, local business leaders and entrepreneurs networked and participated in informative workshops, all presented in Spanish.

In August, For Your Best Self Dermatology and Plastic Surgery presented Wine Women & Shoes Space Coast, which benefitted weVENTURE. The event was an opportunity for women in the community to gather, show off their favorite pair of shoes, enjoy wine tastings, shop local woman-owned businesses in the marketplace and see the latest looks from local boutiques and female designers, all while supporting weVENTURE and its mission.

Moving into fall, the center hosted its annual IMPACT Summit, a business leadership conference, in October with keynote speaker Laura DiBella, the first female Florida secretary of commerce and the former president and CEO of Enterprise Florida.

STUDENTS DRAW PARALLELS BETWEEN BLOCKCHAIN CONFERENCE AND COURSES

In April, Giacomo Bandini '23 MBA and Natalie Odisho '18 M.A. represented Florida Tech as volunteers at the MiamiNFT conference, where they organized the technological draw in Miami.

MiamiNFT featured 200 speakers on two stages spanning three days at Mana Wynwood convention center. Keynote speakers included businessman, investor and famed "shark" Mark Cuban and serial entrepreneur, Quest Nutrition founder and billionaire Tom Bilyeu.

The conference centered on action and what individuals can do to create results now, while the cryptocurrency community is still forming, as well as to impact industry and build upon science—lessons similarly taught at Florida Tech, Odisho says.

She and Bandini recently completed professor Abram Walton's blockchain course, one of the first of its kind in the country. Introduced in spring 2022, the course was created in response to the increasing cybersecurity threats and the rising demand for blockchain skills in the workforce.

Bandini is innovating in cryptocurrencies and aims to help others adapt to a changing business environment with an international focus.

Odisho was introduced to nonfungible tokens (NFTs) through instructor Tim Muth's CapSource collaboration with Genuino, an Italian NFT company that linked real-world objects, like sports jerseys, to the Fiorentina soccer team.

"Florida Tech is creating knowledge for students to disrupt the current models," Odisho said.



BUSINESS APPLIED SERIES RELAUNCHES

Assistant professor Jignya Patel has relaunched the Business Applied series after a pandemic hiatus. Presented by the Bisk College of Business, the series invites business owners, executives, consultants, practitioners, leaders and students to get new, actionable industry insights from the university's top business faculty.

In April, assistant professor Keiron Hylton gave the presentation, "Anatomy of a Strategic Decision: From a Museum to Your C-Suite." During his talk, Hylton described a senior strategy class project regarding the future of the Foosaner Art Museum five years ago. He had drawn upon his entrepreneurial, consulting and investment banking experience to introduce matrix decision analysis to students. He then discussed the pros and cons of this approach and offered some hypotheses about the future of decision-making and the prospect of high decision quality in the 21st century.

The fall semester's speaker is still to be announced.

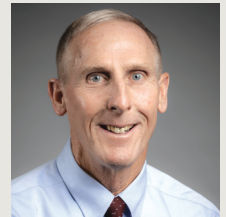


MUTH AWARDED AT SPRING '23 HONORS CONVOCATION

Instructor Tim Muth won the Kerry Bruce Clark Award for Excellence in Teaching at the spring 2023 Honors Convocation, which recognizes and honors students and faculty for outstanding performance.

Muth teaches various courses in the college, including Global Business Strategies and Personal Financial Planning. He also advises the International Accreditation Council for Business Education (IACBE) case competition teams and introduced Florida Tech to the X-Culture project, through which Panthers form a team with students from other countries and work to solve real business challenges posed by multinational companies.

"Tim Muth is one of the most effective international business educators, adored by his students, respected and looked up to by his colleagues," COB Dean Theodore Richardson said. "He is the perfect example of what other faculty should aspire to be in the classroom."



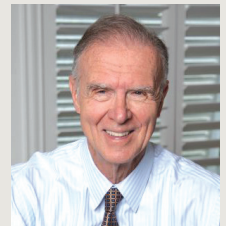
SEEMER WINS OUTSTANDING ALUMNI AWARD

Robert "Bob" Seemer '85 MBA, along with seven other Florida Tech alumni, were honored at the annual Alumni Awards Gala during Homecoming in March.

Recipient of the 2023 Bisk College of Business Outstanding Alumni Award, Seemer is a management consultant and trainer for organizations and individuals seeking performance excellence.

Seemer earned his bachelor's degree from Georgia Tech and his MBA at Florida Tech, noting that it was a pivotal landmark in his career. Early in his career, he held industrial engineering, management and leadership positions at UPS Inc., Boeing Co. and Florida Power and Light (FPL).

After leaving FPL in 1991, he and his wife, Maria, created Competitive Technologies, a consulting and training firm. They later sold Competitive Technologies and created Electronic Training Solutions to capitalize on the world's early transition to digital learning.





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Expert Perspective by Jignya Patel

ADOPT, RESIST OR ADAPT ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

Artificial intelligence (AI), constructed on a vast variety and volume of personal and public data, is increasingly pervading all aspects of human life. From health care, communication and finance to art, music and sports, there is hardly an aspect of life untouched by AI.

In the initial years of growth, people were enchanted with the conveniences and pleasures afforded by AI technologies, such as voice-based assistants like Alexa, leading to the widespread adoption of AI. These AI technologies possessed limited decision-making latitude and autonomy.

Today, the sentiments related to AI are different. The public's emotions toward AI range from "very excited" to "highly concerned."

Technological advancements have made it possible for innovative forms of AI, such as ChatGPT, to appear in the market at little or no cost to the consumer. These radical AI technologies possess expansive decision-making latitude and have the ability to self-learn and make complex autonomous decisions without much human intervention.

In addition to convenience and pleasure, some people now associate AI with negative concepts, such as loss of privacy, unfairness,

inequity and potential human harm, causing them to resist further AI adoption. People are left with the question, "Should I adopt or resist AI?"

The answer lies in understanding that convenience and pleasure provided by AI technologies are directly at odds with privacy and identity, the two most valued assets of human life.

For example, TikTok's ability to precisely predict the next video is made possible because a user, knowingly or unknowingly, has traded the confidentiality of personal data for the convenience of personalized information. In the quest for personalized convenience, users are eventually cocooned in self-reinforcing ideas, as personalization does not allow for competitive ideas.

Similarly, ChatGPT offers writing convenience but simultaneously takes away users' opportunity to think and express their own ideas.

A chance to develop one's personal identity is lost in both examples as the desire for convenience and pleasure increases.

While abstinence from AI is unrealistic in today's era, high dependence on AI can be dehumanizing. Could the path

forward be to adapt to AI by learning to regulate our need for AI-generated convenience and pleasure? How can we teach today's youth to regulate this need? These are some of the questions my research aims to address.

My current work examines the psychosocial mechanisms through which humans develop an intimate relationship with AI, a concept known as "AI identity." Insights from this research can help us understand when and under what conditions humans trade their personal identity for AI identity when seeking convenience and pleasure.

Mankind's relentless pursuit of convenience and pleasure must be tempered by an equally relentless pursuit of ethical responsibility within the fast-growing realm of AI.



This piece was featured in the spring 2023 edition of Florida Tech Magazine.